

Message Text

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SUBJECT: 1975 DAMASCUS INTERNATIONAL FAIR

REF: DAMASCUS 0404

1. SUMMARY: DAMASCUS FAIR AUTHORITIES MOST EAGER TO HAVE US PRESENCE IN 1975 DAMASCUS INTERNATIONAL FAIR AND OFFER TO BUILD PAVILION AT NO COST TO USG. USG WOULD PAY ONLY NORMAL RENTAL FEE FOR COVERED SPACE. EMBASSY AGAIN RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF COMMERCIAL PRESENCE (CPF) PARTICIPATION IN THIS YEAR'S FAIR. END SUMMARY.

2. ECON/CML OFFICER AND POLITICAL OFFICER (WHO HEADED EMBASSY'S EFFORTS DURING 1974 FAIR) HAVE MET WITH DAMASCUS FAIR AUTHORITIES TO REVIEW ON EXPLORATORY BASIS AVAILABILITY OF SUITABLE SPACE IN 1975 FAIR. POSSIBILITIES OF CURRENT PAVILION SPACE, SUCH AS HALF OF JAPANESE PAVILION WE USED LAST YEAR (OUR HALF INSIDE OF 420 SQ METERS, PLUS OUTSIDE AREA OF 646 SQ METERS FOR TOTAL OF 1,066 SQ METERS) NOT AVAILABLE AS JAPANESE WANT ENTIRE PAVILION FOR 1975 FAIR. YUGOSLAVS (OTHER POSSIBILITY) ALSO TAKING THEIR ENTIRE PAVILION (1,707 SQ METERS INSIDE, PLUS 657 SQUARE METERS OUTSIDE). NO BHER EXISTING PAVILIONS AVAILABLE.

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3. REFERRING TO DAMASCUS FAIR MAP (WHICH AVAILABLE IN

WASHINGTON IN FAIR FILE OF 1974 PAVILION DIRECTOR BRAD TYRRELL, USDOC/BIC), FAIR AUTHORITIES OFFERED TO BUILD PAVILION OF CEMENT FLOOR, PIPE AND CINDER BLOCK CONSTRUCTION, TO OUR SIZE SPECIFICATIONS IN FOOTBALL FIELD AREA TOWARD WESTERN END OF FAIRGROUNDS. WHILE FOOTBALL FIELD AREA IS BEING CONSOLIDATED INTO 1975 FAIRGROUNDS BECAUSE OF EXPECTED LOSS OF SPACE AT EASTERN END OF FAIRGROUNDS DURING 1976 GIVEN ROAD OVERPASS CONSTRUCTION. NEW FOUNTAINS TO BE BUILT IN MIDDLE OF FORMER FOOTBALL FIELD BEHIND PROPOSED PAVILION SITE. FYI, SINCE SOVIETS WILL BE LOSING PAVILION NUMBER ONE AT EASTERN END OF FAIRGROUNDS BY 1976 FAIR, SOVIETS HAVE DECIDED TO BUILD NEW PERMANENT PAVILION AT SOUTH END OF FOOTBALL FIELD FOR USE IN 1976. SOVIETS WILL REMAIN AT PRESENT LOCATION FOR 1975 FAIR.

4. PROPOSAL BY FAIR AUTHORITIES TO BUILD PAVILION FOR US AT NORTH END OF FIELD HAS GREAT ATTRACTION SINCE WE CAN PROVIDE SIZE SPECIFICATION, AND WE CAN CHOOSE OPTIMUM INSIDE AND OUTSIDE SPACE AND DIRECTIONAL FACINGS. MOREOVER, PROPOSED SPACE HAS SAME ATTRACTION AS SYRIAN PAVILION (NO. 34) IN THAT IT WILL MEAN CLEAR FIELD OF VIEW FROM MAIN ROAD PASSING IN FRONT OF FAIRGROUNDS AND THUS GIVE MUCH GREATER PROMINENCE TO OUR PAVILION THAN LAST YEAR WHEN WE HAD BACK HALF OF JAPANESE PAVILION, AWAY FROM MAIN ROAD. PROPOSED SPACE ALSO ON MAIN PEDESTRIAN THOROUGHFARE BETWEEN PERMANENT PAVILIONS TO EAST AND MARKET-OF-THE-FAIR AND RESTAURANTS AND THEATER TOWARD WESTERN END OF FAIRGROUNDS.

5. PRICE OF PROPOSED SPACE WOULD BE SAME AS THIS YEAR'S COST FOR RENTING PRESENTLY BUILT INSIDE SPACE, LS 35/SQ METER (\$9.59/SQ METER), OR OUTSIDE SPACE IF REQUIRED, LS 15/SQ METER (\$4.11/SQ METER). FAIR AUTHORITIES WILL CONNECT NEW PAVILION WITH ALL SERVICES (ELECTRICITY--WHICH THIS YEAR WILL BE 220 AND 380 VOLTS, THREE PHASE, PLUS NEUTRAL, AND NO 115 VOLT AS LAST YEAR, WATER, TELEPHONE, SEWER, ETC.).

6. FAIR AUTHORITIES OBVIOUSLY AWARE ONLY WAY US CAN PARTICIPATE IN 1975, GIVEN ALL OTHER SUITABLE SPACE TAKEN, IS FOR THEM TO MAKE THIS CONCESSIONAL OFFER OF A NEW BUILDING. THIS IS CLEAR DEMONSTRATION OF DESIRE TO HAVE US IN FAIR IN 1975.
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ARRANGEMENT FAR PREFERABLE TO DICKERING OVER SHARE OF SOMEONE ELSE'S SPACE AS WE DID LAST YEAR. SUCH A PAVILION WOULD BE FOCAL POINT OF ALMOST ENTIRE FAIR GIVEN ITS PREOMINENT LOCATION AND WE AGAIN URGE APPROVAL OF US PARTICIPATION IN THIS YEAR'S DAMASCUS FAIR. GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT WE WILL HAVE TO MOVE RAPIDLY SO THAT FAIR AUTHORITIES CAN BEGIN CONSTRUCTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
MURPHY

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